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Editorial

THERE may be a significant moral distinction between the totalitarianism of Soviet Russia and of Nazi Germany and between power politics as pursued by the rulers of the one and of the other. We have never seen a convincing account of it. Although the make-believe of the war period has now been considerably modified, our press and politicians, with a few notable exceptions, continue to use plenty of whitewash when they describe the proceedings of Russia. The accomplishments that were acquired in the former period of appeasement are easily revived. The *Manchester Guardian* (February 12, 1946), referring to the recent elections in Russia, assures its readers that " it would be unjust to dismiss the whole affair as being on a par with Hitler's plebiscites." Even Dr Reinhold Niebuhr, writing in *Christianity and Society* (Winter, 1945), concludes a candid discussion of "The Russian Enigma" by saying that in a conflict with Soviet Russia America and Britain would be robbed of "the moral sense of fighting for a civilization against barbarism," because Russia and the West form parts of one civilization. We do not follow him.

Entertain the best hopes you can about what the present régime in Russia will eventually turn into, but why deceive yourself about what it is like now ? In the days ahead the Christian man will be sustained not by shutting his eyes to political realities but by confidence in God's hidden sovereignty over the world.

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Many readers replied to our inquiry about the desirability of restoring the feature "Our Contributors." All who wrote were in favour of its restoration, though with varying degrees of enthusiasm. We bow to the general will. It was pointed out by several correspondents that we were mistaken in saying that it is only theological and religious periodicals that supply information about their contributors. A reader in the U.S.A. says that he wishes the practice were more common in that country. Another reader says that, if articles are signed, he prefers to be told who the writers are, but adds that he wishes "the whole thing from the editing downwards had the weighty mystery of anonymity." "Especially would I have the reviews unsigned. They ought to be THEOLOGY reviewing books; not so-and-so reviewing a book in THEOLOGY."

That is, of course, another question. Both anonymous and signed journalism have their functions to perform. Both are liable to abuse, and both can make for irresponsibility. Where the contributors to a journal form a small and closely-knit group of writers, holding the same opinions, anonymity is feasible and perhaps desirable. The *Tracts for the Times* and the *Church Quarterly Review* in its earlier days

would be cases in point. But THEOLOGY does not aspire to be an organ of that kind. The bond uniting its contributors is membership in the Church, not adherence to a "school of thought" or sect within the Church. Our feet are thus set in a large room, and we wish to hear all the voices that may rightly be heard in it. Each contributor is responsible only for his own voice, while the editor is responsible for deciding that his is a voice that should be heard.

We do not feel that this makes for editorial indefiniteness, and among our many shortcomings we have not been accused of that. Nor does the consequence of this policy appear to be a hubbub. It may be worth while to recall the aims with which the present editor set out in January, 1939. Many of our present readers may not have seen them stated, though they may easily have inferred them. We said then that the following would serve as a definition of our aims:

(*a*) To provide a medium through which all that is best in contemporary theology may reach the clergy, the laity, and those outside the Church who are looking towards Christianity for a reasonable and relevant faith;

(*b*) to serve as an organ where Anglican writers with different associations and various special interests may meet and contribute to the clarification and exposition of the faith which has their allegiance;

(*c*) to serve as a liaison between theological thought and those movements in contemporary literature, art and political philosophy, which are working towards a rediscovery of the significance of the Christian tradition.

We desire to reaffirm these aims, and it seems a sufficient ambition to want to make THEOLOGY an ever more adequate expression of them.

Pilgrims or Explorers?

IN view of the publicity given on railway bookstalls to books and pamphlets by the "Rationalist Press Association" Christians ought, perhaps, to pay more attention to them than such publications intrinsically deserve. Two booklets have appeared recently, however, in their "Thinker's Forum," which are worth taking notice of, both because they are above the average quality and because they usefully summarize very common objections to attempted correlations of art and religion. They are *English Literature and the Agnostic* (No. 32, 1944) and *Art and Christianity* (No. 35, 1945), both by R. C. Churchill. Mr Churchill is a fairly competent critic, who has published essays, not only in *Scrutiny*, *The Nineteenth Century and After*, etc., but even in the *Dublin Review* ! His tone is, on the whole, more modest and less hysterical than most writings of the R.P.A., and he is to be reckoned with.

I shall take the pamphlets in reverse order, as I have less to say about the second. *Art and Christianity* argues that there is no connexion between the Christian Faith and the best art of Europe. Christian apologists, who claim Renaissance art as the greatest, and the most Christian, art must, he says, imply that there was a sudden break in the religious and artistic tradition of mankind—imply that the coming of the Christian Faith led to a renewal of art which constitutes a break

with the religious *and* cultural past, and which led to the flowering of the Renaissance. Such a break in European continuity is absurd. And in any case it is much more convincing to interpret the Renaissance as a break with Christian dogmatic tradition—"these Renaissance artists . . . adopted the human element in the story and let the dogma take care of itself. Their art was based firmly on the natural." Renaissance artists preferred to paint the Nativity or the Crucifixion, both of them dramatically, rather than the Resurrection, because of their "dislike of the supernatural." "The priest elevates the supernatural at the expense of the natural man. . . . The artist does not fall into the same error. Had he done so, the most brilliant period in art would obviously have been the period when the doctrine of the priest had the most power and the widest acceptance—in the Middle Ages. But the sceptical, or, rather, the compromising, Renaissance was the most brilliant period in all branches of art, literature, and music."

This is the core of Mr Churchill's argument. There is much else which may be ignored—references to the "ignoble doctrine of the Church in regard to the torments of Hell," "The doctrine of Original Sin leads inevitably to the Inquisition," and other remarks which are the commonplace of controversy. But there is one initial misunderstanding which affects the whole of the argument, and by correcting which we may be able to suggest a less damning interpretation of art in its relation to Christianity. The doctrine of the Fall, says Mr Churchill, leads to the denial that the founder of Christianity "could possibly have been a human being: (this leads) . . . to the concentrating upon the supernatural *at the expense* of the natural. . . . Belief in the supernatural Jesus is *ipso facto* a denial that such a virtuous and intelligent person . . . could possibly have been a human being; in other words, it is a denial of the virtue and intelligence of man." Now, without conducting Mr Churchill far into the region of careful theological statement it ought to be pointed out that his account of the Christian doctrine of Christ is plainly heretical (docetist), and therefore that Christians (or artists) who have "concentrated upon the supernatural at the expense of the natural"—alas, there have been plenty of them—have been simply unorthodox. It is precisely the Renaissance emphasis upon the natural at the expense of the supernatural which makes that period, for some of us, less than Christian and less than the highest period in art. Mr Churchill recognizes, inconsistently, in one place that "it would be far truer to say . . . that the supreme period of Christian art was in the Byzantine and Gothic ages." If that is so, it is not fair to take Renaissance art as the centre of discussion. The point is that either extreme is less than fully orthodox: the over-emphasis upon the supernatural, as in some medieval art which had got stuck in a too world-renouncing, almost Manichean theology, or the over-emphasis upon the natural, as in the more revolutionary Renaissance art with its psychological twist. And the Christian claims that "less than fully orthodox" means also less than fully human—and therefore defective as art. The contention that Mr Churchill ought to have faced is the Christian declaration that

only in the light of the supernatural is the natural seen in its truest proportion. Mr E. I. Watkin, whose *Catholic Art and Culture* is a history of European art with profounder insights than Mr Churchill ever shows, says that Blake revives Michelangelo's manner—with a difference: "For him the human form will be divine. For Michelangelo it was but the noblest visible creature. Yet Blake, the neo-Gnostic, will regard the present condition of the human form as evil, thus fluctuating between excesses, where Catholic truth keeps the centre." And Watkin's vision for the future contrasts strikingly with the necessary pessimism of the agnostic, foreseeing in the historical dialectic "an advance through the thesis of transcendentalism, the vertical movement, as it extends from the Christian era to the Renaissance and beyond it to the downfall of Baroque, through the antithesis of immanentism, the horizontal movement extending from the Renaissance to the present day and still dominant, to a synthesis of transcendentalism and immanentism, the religion-culture of the future."

A phrase from the later pamphlet condenses the theme of the earlier, *English Literature and the Agnostic*: "The religious mind, being a mind 'made up,' usually by someone or something outside itself, by 'authority,' tends to be inflexible; flexibility is of the essence of the artist mind." This earlier pamphlet of Mr Churchill's is—despite the occurrence of the familiar gibes against the doctrine of the Fall, etc.—the more measured. Its theme, just indicated, is repeated in other terms: the artist must have what Keats called the "negative capability," which rules out dogmatic assurance—"when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason." And again, in a quotation from Mr D. W. Harding, which expresses the argument even better: the quotation comes from a review of Mr Eliot's "The Idea of a Christian Society" (*Scrutiny*, December, 1939), in which Mr Harding complains that for the Christian the goal of all movement is predetermined, so that he can only be a pilgrim now, never an explorer. The Christian's "peace of mind depends on the conviction that he knows what he is ultimately aiming at; all his activity must be directed towards a goal which he has already postulated. By this means he escapes the insecurity of being in a strict sense an explorer and becomes instead a pilgrim."

The way to implement this (very plausible) thesis is, of course, to quote all the leading poets and novelists, show their agnostic mentality, and then compare them favourably with others who have had faith. It is not difficult to do, and dissent may be brushed aside by such a simple generalization as "I don't need to show in detail (amid overwhelming proof) that Coleridge, Wordsworth, Burns, Peacock, Lamb, Byron, Hunt, de Quincey, Hazlitt, Keats and Shelley were all in their different ways of an agnostic turn of mind." Nobody would wish to-day to bid heavily for the loyalties of Hunt, Lamb, de Quincey and Hazlitt; and taking "agnostic turn of mind" in its broadest and least defined sense, there is no doubt that the phrase is applicable even to Coleridge and Wordsworth, as also to Shakespeare or any great

imaginative writer. But it is precisely the employment of the term in this broad and undefined sense, so as to establish "agnosticism" as an ultimate philosophy, which I should challenge. This challenge will be developed in a moment. Meanwhile, let us continue to examine the individuals Mr Churchill cites.

It is significant, he goes on, that "a writer of great intelligence and genius like George Eliot should have been an agnostic, while a writer of more prolixity than literary talent, like Charlotte Yonge, should have been an admirer of Keble." Charlotte Yonge had not, we admit, the speculative ("exploratory") mind, nor the crisp prose of George Eliot (though those who have not read her *Lady Hester, or Ursula's Narrative*, for instance, will be surprised how much better the wit and organization is than they had expected); but she is aware of basic realities of man and society in a way that makes better stylists like Mrs Gaskell, or even Thackeray, seem superficial by comparison. Nor would anyone dispute that George Eliot was an avowed Agnostic. But it is a wistful agnosticism which leads her to create most roundly and warmly when dependent upon the old traditions she can no longer believe in.[1] Coming to modern times, Mr Churchill produces D. H. Lawrence, T. F. Powys and L. H. Myers as examples of fine writers who have "not merely accepted a more or less agnostic view of life, as (E. M.) Forster has, but tried to justify it." Here again we find the ambiguity in the word "agnostic" which results from a begging of questions. L. H. Myers comes nearest, perhaps, to the official agnostic view by expressing, in his deepest writing, an Indian philosophy. But it seems to me precisely not the "agnostic" element in Buddhism which comes out in the crucial parts of his work—*e.g.*, the contrast between Rajah Amar and the sensualist, Prince Danyal, with his lascivious Camp: "The Camp was withdrawn because it had to be: . . . moreover the idea that they (*s.c.*, Danyal and his followers) were sufficient unto themselves was very necessary to them; but it was nothing else than the truth, that they depended basically upon a solid, shockable world of decorum and common sense. They had to believe that a great ox-like eye was fixed upon them in horror. Without this their lives lost their point" (*The Root and the Flower*). The main theme of this book is the twin influence upon young Prince Jali of his father (Amar)'s Buddhism and his mother (Sita)'s Syrian Christianity. Moreover, the profoundest part of the last book, *The Pool of Vishnu*, is the conversation with and direction by the "Guru," who is to provide the contemplative check upon the aggressiveness and ruthlessness of local political administration, and also to dispense spiritual advice to a couple whose marriage had become disharmonized. But here again it is not the "agnosticism" of Eastern thought which is brought out, so much as the essentially (yet inconsistently, for the Indian) creative element in mysticism—that element which brings it closest to the mysticism of the Christian West; and it is brought out, note, by

[1] For a comparison between the early *Adam Bede*, or the central and magnificent *Middlemarch*, with the later and weaker *Daniel Deronda* with its too explicit philosophy of evolutionary radicalism, see a most illuminating essay by Mr S. L. Bethell in *The Criterion*, October, 1938.

contrast with the rootless atheism of the English Smith (earlier in the book), the power-principle of the Muslim Abul Fezl or Sheik Mobarek, and the suffocating conservatism of the caste-system. Mr Churchill quotes the Guru's statement of faith: "What is this body of authority of which you speak? It is a mound of corpses. . . . Your priests will pretend to enclose the Spirit in churches. But those churches will be empty. Spirit is waiting in the market-place—waiting for the re-awakened and re-awakening man." This will sound, to those who have not read Myers' novel, like an effective attack upon the dogma-ridden Christian Church; actually it is directed against the static caste-society which Christianity has, as a matter of historical fact, been the chief agent in demolishing! So much for Myers. Lawrence and Powys are even more equivocal exemplars of "agnosticism," with their imaginative dependence upon, if not belief in, myth and magic.

But agnosticism is an ambiguous word. For there is an important distinction between the "agnostic mentality" and "agnosticism" as a positive creed. The former is found in a degree in any genuine artist. T. S. Eliot has said that Montaigne expresses "the scepticism of *every* human being. For every man who thinks and lives by thought must have his own scepticism, that which stops at the question, that which ends in denial, or that which leads to faith and which is somehow integrated into the faith which transcends it" (Introduction to Pascal's *Pensées*). And it was Donne, by now a Christian, who said, "Would you know of a truth? Doubt, and then you will inquire. . . . As no man resolves of any thing wisely, firmly, safely, of which he never doubted, never debated, so neither doth God withdraw a resolution from any man, that doubts with an humble purpose to settle his owne faith, and not with a wrangling purpose to shake another man's" (E. M. Simpson, *Prose Works of Donne*, p. 58). It is a common error for the non-Christian to picture the Christian Church as a cosy society enclosed safely within strong castle walls, very pleasant if you can sufficiently deny yourself to climb in, but once in there is nothing to do but walk round and round the yard. The Christian replies simply that it is agnosticism as a final position that shuts itself in, builds around itself the narrow walls of naturalism, while the freemen of the divine commonwealth can take the infinite air outside. That is one assertion against another. But if we are to adopt Mr Churchill's method of citing personalities, it is fair to refer to the later poems of Mr Eliot himself, where surely only the bigot can deny that the pilgrim *is* still the explorer. Though for faith victory is certain, yet here man is still in the battle; and so Mr Eliot can explore the meaning of time and history, the place of tradition, the reality of the past enfolded with the future into the present—tentative and hesitating (that is the effect of his honesty), yet with one secure point of leverage, the still point of the turning world, "the moment in time but time was made through that moment." Is it the centrifugal Pilgrim who says:

> We shall not cease from exploration
> And the end of all our exploring
> Will be to arrive where we started
> And know the place for the first time (*Little Gidding*)?

And apart from what the poem says (which might be different from what it *does*) do Mr Eliot's later poems as a whole sound like mere repetitive antiphons? Even the pioneer drives into land that is already *there*.

But need we play Mr Churchill's game of citing personalities at all? He is anxious to claim Shakespeare as, if not a conscious sceptic like Montaigne (though some doubt whether even Montaigne can be so described), at any rate as an agnostic—*e.g.*, about Immortality. (His quotations to prove this do not seem to me conclusive, but there is no space to discuss it.) But it is important, in discussing the relation of faith to poetry, not to narrow down to the individual. Better the unbelieving politician trying to establish the natural and moral law within a Christian tradition than the devoutly Christian politician ineptly "muddling through" or, worse, working for a corporatist totalitarianism. So, to a lesser degree, with the artist or poet. What matters is the general moral, philosophical, theological beliefs which lie behind a culture. If these are Christian, the Catholic and the "agnostic" writer (*e.g.*, in seventeenth-century England) will lean on them. Shakespearean scholarship is increasingly clear that Shakespeare was the last medievalist rather than the first Renaissance man; but Prof. Tillyard, an exponent of this thesis, is clear that, for instance, when he describes *Richard III* as a very religious play ("There is no atom of doubt in Richmond's prayer before he falls asleep in his tent at Bosworth"), he is "speaking of the play and not of Shakespeare" (Shakespeare's Historical Plays, p. 204). It is possible to drive too deep a wedge between the artist and his product; but this emphasis is salutary. And when we talk in the more general terms of "Weltanschauung," though we multiply the dangers of vagueness and misinterpretation, we are less likely to be misled by the exceptional writer who proves the rule. On this wider level Mr Churchill is less observant. "The absence of any major literary figure between the death of Chaucer and Elizabethan times is inexplicable if we take the Catholic standpoint; it can be explained only by the conservative control of the Church, and its teaching of the folly of purely human things." How, then, does this simple explanation account for the productivity of Chaucer's own age? Is it not more reasonable to suggest that all creative energy was redirected from imaginative literature by Caxton and the open Bible? "Redirection" is a keyword in the history of European culture. The "agnostic mind"—that God-given, salutary honesty—questions the signposts. But when "agnosticism," as a positive philosophy, attempts to suggest the new route, it falters—and is hypnotized by the strongest claimant. It is not agnosticism that pleads for humanity in *The Pool of Vishnu*; that pleads for integrity and sympathy in the novels of Virginia Woolf (who strove so hard at a "negative capability," yet could not help asserting her own values); that cries out at religious persecution in Breughel's art; that inveighs with D. H. Lawrence against the complacent certainties of scientists and cocksure Christians. It is natural human sympathy, a thing given by God and vindicated on the Cross. A true agnosticism would have to question that too—why should it be exempt?

And can it be claimed that that natural human sympathy has best been preserved where divine faith has been lost? Faith is a preservative, never an excuse for inaction; an incentive to exploration, not a predestined itinerary for a Karma pilgrimage. Mr Churchill's two provocative pamphlets (for which we are grateful to him) may be finally answered together by that fine Christian artist, Mr David Jones: "The ability to paint a good picture does not come through philosophy or religion in any direct manner at all. *They* could only have, indeed, a damaging effect on the making of things if thought of as providing some theory to work by—a substitute for imagination or direct creativeness, and would so sadly defeat their own object—which is to protect the imagination from the slavery of false theory and to give the perfect law of liberty to our creativeness. To protect, in fact, what is natural to man."[1]

MARTIN JARRETT-KERR, C.R.

Gladstone on Church and State

"WHAT Gladstone said" in 1880 or thereabouts has become a popular symbol for that which now interests only the pedant or the antiquary. But even in 1880 what Gladstone wrote on Church and State in 1838 was regarded as dead and done with. Had not Macaulay on its first appearance refuted it once and for all? And had not Gladstone himself speedily seen the error of his ways and abandoned his original thesis as a relic of his unregenerate days? To-day most educated people know Gladstone's early work only through the medium of Macaulay. It is remembered along with Montgomery's poems and Croker's edition of Boswell as "a capital shrovetide cock to throw at." It may seem then the height of paradox to devote a whole book[2] in 1945 to an examination of *The State in its relations with the Church* and, in a lesser degree, of its sequel, *Church Principles*. But Mr Vidler knows well what he is doing. He is challenging deliberately the general trend of thought of the last hundred years. On the fundamental issue, he maintains, Gladstone was right and Macaulay was wrong. Macaulay's apparent triumph was due largely to the fact that he so fully shared the prejudices and unconscious assumptions of his contemporaries which it was Gladstone's object to call in question, and the dominance of those assumptions has been disastrous.

Beyond doubt *The Orb and the Cross* is a remarkable *tour de force* which puts us all in Mr Vidler's debt. Gladstone's own style is eloquent and impressive but far too copious and leisurely for modern taste. The fourth, revised and greatly enlarged, edition of *The State in its relations with the Church*, which Mr Vidler uses, contains seven hundred, and *Church Principles* another five hundred and fifty pages; in *The Orb and the Cross* there are only one hundred and sixty. In that space Mr Vidler expounds Gladstone's central argument; he traces it

[1] Quoted in article by H. S. Ede, *Horizon*, August 1943.
[2] *The Orb and the Cross*, by Alec R. Vidler. S.P.C.K. 12s. 6d.

briefly backwards through Coleridge, Burke and Hooker to medieval thought and relates it to present-day thinkers such as Niebuhr and Brunner; he makes this examination a "doorway" into a "normative" discussion of the general problem of the relations of Church and State; and he offers a complete reassessment of Gladstone's development as a political thinker. His argument is very fully documented; over two hundred books are cited in the bibliography and about a third of the whole space is given to the footnotes. In one respect, indeed, he writes with unique authority. As Warden of St Deiniol's Library he has access to the founder's copies of all the relevant books; and at point after point he supports his interpretation of Gladstone's mind by quoting from them Gladstone's own marginal comments.

As Mr Vidler depicts it, the main issue is this. On the one hand is the gospel of the Enlightenment in its English form, the "liberalism" against which the Oxford Movement was a protest and whose tenets are set out in a note to the later editions of Newman's *Apologia*. To ensure the good conduct of public affairs, you have only to spread useful knowledge, widen the franchise, destroy privilege, remove restrictions on individual liberty, make room for the operation of cool self-interest, and trust the general sense of decency; if any tincture of religion is required, let it be the undogmatic religion of all sensible men. Between the purposes of Church and State there is no intrinsic connexion. The State has only a temporal end, the protection of person and property; it imperils that end and exceeds its function when it enters the controversial and murky sphere of religion. From a wholly different point of view the separation of Church and State is also advocated by those Christians in whose eyes the Church loses virtue and succumbs to the allure of the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them when it entangles itself in secular tasks, avails itself of secular prestige and appeals to secondary motives.

Against this heresy in both its forms Gladstone maintains that to divorce Church and State is to set apart the affairs of this world from those of the next, and that this is "social atheism" (*S.R.C.*, II, 344, 360, 379). This contention is based on three fundamental principles. (1) Human nature is deranged and, in the absence of some strong counteracting force, must come to disaster. Hence *laissez-faire* is futile. (2) In the providential order, the State is designed to provide such a counteracting force, and, in any case, it does, willy-nilly, "exercis manifold, pervasive, subtle, potent, moral influence" (*S.R.C.*, I, 94). Therefore it cannot evade a distinctively moral responsibility, and, for the right discharge of its obligations, it requires in a high degree moral motives and restraints. Hence any purely utilitarian conception of its function is false. (3) Human nature being what it is, the State. cannot fulfil such a function without the powerful aid of religion. Hence secularism is bankrupt.

Mr Vidler values Gladstone's argument principally for the light it throws on the Christian norm. His own view of this can be stated in three propositions. First, a "high state" is the proper corollary of a "high church" view. He devotes an exceedingly interesting, though somewhat tantalizing, chapter to a discussion of Gladstone's ascrip-

tion of "personality" to the State, in which he relates this to Gierke and Maitland, to Figgis and Barker, to Forsyth and even to Buber. He concludes that, in the sense of a "metaphysical essence," personality cannot be conceded, but that the State has at least a quasi-personality in that it is the subject of moral responsibility. (For his practical purpose this is enough; but, as he recognizes, the metaphysical question is raised rather than thoroughly discussed or decisively answered. One reason adduced against a bolder affirmation is that the only group-personality in the full sense is that of the Church —which is embodied in her divine Head—while natural communities have only incomplete personality. But, since Lotze, many Christian thinkers have said the same of individual human personality.) This obligation extends to religion in that the State, in its corporate capacity, must choose between religion and secularism, between Christianity and other religions. The Christian citizen can never be content with a State that is neutral. In Mr Eliot's terminology, the State should be a "Christian community," acknowledging for its corporate acts a Christian standard of judgment, or, in Gladstone's words in 1883, "a Divine governing power to which we are to account for every thought we conceive, for every word that we utter."

Secondly, Church and State are interdependent: they require each other's co-operation. The State needs the aid of the Church because no less potent force than grace can order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; it needs, too, to be confronted by an independent power which can act as its conscience, enlightening, warning and admonishing. The Church needs the State, partly because some degree of public order is an almost indispensable condition for any widespread practice of the spiritual life, partly because it has a duty to the whole nation and not only to its own adherents and " must declare man's civic as well as his ecclesiastical duties" (p. 33), and partly because it has itself a tendency to the demonic, requiring an external check. When Pius IX denounces Cavour or the English and Irish episcopal benches denounce Irish disestablishment, there is no strong antecedent probability that the balance of truth is on the churchmen's side.

But, thirdly, religious toleration is not only a frequent political necessity but an urgent and universal Christian duty. Here Mr Vidler is still in line with the youthful Gladstone, but his emphasis is stronger and his break with Christian tradition is more explicit. "The duty of toleration is a lesson that God has taught his Church during the last three centuries, and it must never be unlearned" (p. 123). Ideally the State should profess a definite faith, but it should also provide full security for dissenting minorities. Even the true Church has no monopoly of theological truth. In some degree its vision will always be dimmed and its institutional life corroded, so that the dissenter's protest, however one-sided, has a positive value.

It will be seen that Mr Vidler dismisses many current opinions as fallacious. Among them are the following: that for the State religious diversity is innocuous; that religious bodies should claim from the State only "a fair field and no favour"; that for the Church an alliance

with the State is of no intrinsic importance; that for the State religious toleration entails religious indifference.

But though Mr Vidler's statement of the Christian norm is challenging and uncompromising, he is, like Niebuhr, ruthlessly realistic in his estimate of immediate possibilities. A genuine union of State and Church was, in his judgment, already impracticable when Gladstone wrote a century ago, and it is doubly impracticable to-day, when both Church and State are in an abnormal and unnatural condition. The State is in a transitional stage. Parliamentary institutions have no longer the prestige and moral authority which Gladstone ascribed to them, but nothing has taken their place. Power is passing from the groups which formerly exercised it; but it is not yet clear with whom it will rest in the coming era or what will be their capacity and goodwill. On the other hand the divisions of the Christian Church, establishment or no establishment, make impossible an exclusive national recognition, such as Gladstone postulated, of any single denomination. (Mr Vidler does not stress, presumably because he takes for granted, the degree to which, in the last century, the popular mind has lost its hold on vital religion, so that recognition on the ground of truth, even of an undivided Church, has become impracticable.) The moral for Christians which he draws is twofold. On the one hand they must work for the best that is politically possible, though that may be very remote from the Christian norm; they must be ready to fight with passion for what is only the eighteenth best conceivable course as against the nineteenth. They must not be too squeamish to undertake "distasteful and often dreadful tasks" (p. 154), for "doctrinaire idealism is not Christian" (p. 137). In Gladstone's day that involved coming to terms with liberalism and *laissez-faire*. To-day it involves coming to terms with social planning. On the other hand the Christian must keep his own and other men's eyes on the norm. Even while working with the Zeitgeist, he must see through it and prophesy against it. For him the immediate policy for which he strives can never at best provide more than a partial and interim solution. He will recognize and proclaim the mixture of motives which prompt it, the inevitably chequered success which it can expect, and its merely transitory character in that it bears within it the seeds of its own decay. Mr Vidler quotes with approval Maritain's dictum, "The idea of making this world purely and simply the Kingdom of God is heresy for the Christian."

The education question is used to illustrate this double duty. The impregnation of a child's imagination with Christian archetypes is only possible in vital relation to the worshipping community; therefore an undenominational religious education must be pilloried as glaringly insufficient. But in present conditions it is the most that the State can reasonably be expected to supply in provided schools; and, in such schools, the Christian must presumably work to make the best of it.

Gladstone's own mental history thus receives an assessment widely different from the common one. He is in no wise pictured as emerging out of darkness into light. On the contrary, Mr Vidler sees in the youthful Gladstone a rarely sensitive and prophetic insight into "the

signs of the times," which, in later life and amid the stress of practical politics, he did not wholly sustain. His conversion to liberalism is ascribed to the pressure of practical circumstances rather than to a real change of conviction. "He ceased to advocate, or to try to act upon, the position he had taken up in *The State in its Relations with the Church*, not because he became convinced that it was in principle wrong, but because he came to see it was in practice impossible. . . . Contemporary political conditions rather than an interior change of convictions—his career rather than his creed—carried Gladstone from the Conservative to the Liberal camp" (pp. 148, 150). The age would have liberal measures, and it was only as a Liberal that he could play his full part. He was actuated partly by a praiseworthy realism and partly by ambition, but "his liberalism was secondary and almost accidental." Though he was the protagonist in the adoption of liberal measures, he neither discarded his old political philosophy nor adopted any other. But he did acquire a nebulous and rather uncritical glorification of freedom and a sanguine optimism which was unjustified. He persuaded himself that what may have been a necessary evil was actually good. He lost his clear vision of the norm and, with it, his penetrating insight into the trend of events. "He thought *laissez-faire* had come to stay. He did not suspect that the tide would turn. His limitations as a statesman, and as a prophet, were due not to his acceptance of the conditions of the time and the place in which his work had to be done, but to his eventual satisfaction with those conditions and to his failure to make allowances for their temporary character and for the extent to which they were the product of non-moral causes" (p. 154). So, in the end, there was some hiatus between his ultimate principles as a churchman and his working creed as a statesman.

In my judgment Mr Vidler successfully establishes his main points—that is, his revaluation of Gladstone's early work and his assertion of its relevance to to-day. But it is very hard to challenge and overthrow a false view without some over-emphasis on the other side; and, while it would be most rash for anyone who has not made an equally exhaustive study to combat Mr Vidler's interpretation of Gladstone, some questions may legitimately be asked. Thus: (1) Is it not superfluous to invoke ambition as part cause of Gladstone's adoption of liberalism? Apart from the fact that those closest to Gladstone seem to have had the most veneration for him,[1] it is unnecessary for Mr Vidler's purpose. On his own showing, Gladstone was not necessarily wrong, in the conditions of the time, in combining with Free Churchmen like Forster and Bright to disestablish the Irish Church or with

[1] For example, Bishop Hamilton in his last illness spoke of his unbounded respect and love for Gladstone and of the comfort he found in the knowledge that it would be for Gladstone to appoint his successor in the bishopric. There is also the unforgettable story in Dean Church's biography of the incident when a visitor at dinner cast doubt on Gladstone's sincerity. The Dean "instantly rose, his face even paler than it usually was, and he said, evidently with the strongest suppression of personal feeling, 'Insincere! Sir, I tell you that to my own knowledge Mr Gladstone goes from communion with God to the great affairs of State'" (*Life and Letters of Dean Church*, p. 305).

an Erastian like Harcourt and an agnostic like Morley to seek to disestablish the Church in Wales. His error lay in supposing the separation of Church and State and other liberal measures to be ideal and permanent, but that belief was not necessitated by his career. In any case is it clear that it was only as a Liberal that Gladstone could hope to come to the front? Between 1850 and 1859 he was frequently invited by Lord Derby to re-establish himself among the Conservative leaders.

Secondly, it is no doubt true that Gladstone never developed a fully articulated Liberal philosophy; but was not his conversion somewhat more deeply grounded and less accidental than Mr Vidler allows? Must not more allowance be made for the following factors? His experience at the Board of Trade and, later, at the Exchequer which, in matters of commerce and finance, converted him to the opinions of the Manchester school; such a "paradeigmatic experience" as the episode of the Neapolitan prisoners and his glowing sympathy with the struggle for liberation in Italy and the Balkans, which convinced him that Bomba and Pius IX and in general the legatees of Metternich rather than of Mazzini were the enemy to be fought; and his discovery, as time went on, that it was to men of the middle and working classes that his moral appeal went home. No doubt he idealized them, as in his youth he had idealized the paternalism of the British aristocracy. But, illusion for illusion, were not the Midlothian electors a more satisfactory and reputable source of power than the Duke of Newcastle, at whose fiat and subject to whose pleasure he had held his seat at Newark in 1838?

Thirdly, Mr Vidler himself quotes Troeltsch's assessment of Gladstone as a Christian statesman. But is it not significant that Troeltsch regards him as an outstanding representative of the "Neo-Calvinist" political attitude and treats him as one example of a general evolution in Calvinism spread over two or three centuries, from insistence on a Christian State to advocacy of " a free Church in a free State"? (*Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, II, 656-78, 922-40). Does not this cast doubt on the adequacy of a theory which explains Gladstone's political evolution in terms of the exigencies of his own career?

Fourthly, is it not easy to exaggerate the extent of Gladstone's change of view? Even in *The State in its Relations with the Church* he had safeguarded himself. Its argument could be expressed in syllogistic form as follows: "In all nations in which public opinion is sufficiently imbued with Christian conviction to permit it, Church and State ought to be in close and formal alliance; England is such a nation; therefore in England Church and State ought to be so allied." It was the minor, not the major, premiss which he came to doubt. His change was in judgment of fact; it was not one of principle.

In conclusion two reflections suggest themselves. First, there is one important point in which Gladstone's original theory "dates." When he argues against concurrent endowment on the ground that two inconsistent religions cannot both be true, he treats the difference between two Christian denominations as if it were on a par with the difference between Christianity itself and another religion. No doubt

it is shallow to regard doctrinal differences as negligible. But the growing threat of secularism to all the Churches on the one hand, and on the other the experience in the ecumenical movement of religious unity beneath all the brokenness of the body, make so harsh a disjunction hardly possible to-day.

Secondly, the insistence at the same time on an absolute norm and on great flexibility in practical modification in face of untoward circumstances gives a basis for Christian action in politics on which a growing number are disposed to build. But it leads at once to a further question which is crucial to-day. Can any half-way house be found between an intractable absolutism which logically involves contracting out from most social obligations and a thoroughgoing relativism which in effect subordinates Christianity to political exigencies? Is any *moral* standard available by which Christian action in politics may be guided? For instance, Gladstone and Bismarck interpreted the duty of a Christian statesman very differently. By what criterion, if any, can the issue between them be decided?

WALTER H. MOBERLY.

Continental Exegesis

LE DESSEIN DE DIEU, by S. de Diétrich. (Éditions Delachaux et Niestlé, S. A. Neuchâtel et Paris. Pp. 290. Prix 4 frs. 75 suisses.)

PART of the significance of this book lies in the fact that Mlle Suzanne de Diétrich has done much in the last few years to promote Bible study in the World's Student Christian Federation. An English translation of some of her Biblical meditations, *Behold Thy King*, was published by the S.C.M. Press before the war; her *Rediscovering the Bible*, based on the experience of different national movements within the W.S.C.F., was reviewed in THEOLOGY in August, 1943. She styles her latest book *Itinéraire Biblique*, and it raises certain critical and exegetical questions which those who find the "continental" strain in which it is written somewhat alien to them but nevertheless wish to approach it sympathetically, cannot refrain from raising. Mlle de Diétrich's book is a most appropriate one out of which to raise them, for it is by no means extreme in its expression; the ecumenical context of the W.S.C.F. in which she writes has made her well aware of tendencies in other parts of the world.

The book proceeds steadily through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation in the following way:

Prologue: Le Commencement des Temps (Genesis i-ii).
Part 1: Le Déroulement des Temps (Abraham to Daniel).
Part 2: L'Accomplissement des Temps (The Gospels).
Part 3: Les Derniers Temps (Acts-Revelation).
Epilogue: Les Nouveaux Cieux et la Nouvelle Terre.

Throughout the unity of the Bible is stressed, and in this respect recent tendencies in Biblical criticism in this country are in full agree-

ment. The point of view from which the author does it may be shown from her remark in the Preface that "history is the story of an unceasing struggle between God who calls and man who resists"; thus she stresses the apparent arbitrariness of God's choice—*e.g.*, Jacob the liar and impostor rather than Esau. Indeed, the Pentateuch gives most scope for her to show her view, as when she declares, with reference to the extraordinary birth of Isaac, that "in the history of salvation all is grace, nothing is natural."

She is no fundamentalist, however, In the Preface she writes: "God delivers Himself to men in the Bible as He delivers Himself to men in His Son." Scholarly notes, mainly based on Lods, are to be found in an appendix, and in general her critical position is sound, though she gets Ezra-Nehemiah in a mess. But she does not apparently allow any differentiation between different parts of the Bible as vehicles of divine revelation, and this is where a crucial difference opens up between much Anglo-Saxon and much Continental exegesis. It is worth looking at the consequences of Mlle de Diétrich's methods a little more closely.

In showing the unity of the Bible she is much influenced by Vischer's *Das Christus Zeugniss des Alten Testaments*. Here is one of her parallels (she is referring to the story of Abraham and Isaac in Gen. xxii):

> Abraham obéit; il obéit sans comprendre, mais il obéit. Il marche trois jours et l'enfant étonné marche à côté de lui. Jésus aussi marchera "trois jours" vers Jérusalem.

Others are: Samuel is to the Davidic era as John the Baptist is to the Messianic; the massacre of the Innocents corresponds to the killing of the Israelite boys in Exodus i; the humility of Mary reverses the pride of Eve (this is closely akin to R.C. arguments for the Immaculate Conception); the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness is of the same type as those of Adam and Eve in the garden; the choice and election of Saul is akin to that of Judas Iscariot. Some of these comparisons and contrasts are more, some less, effective. The theory on which they are based is stated only on page 193:

> "Il est un sense caché des Ecritures qui n'est accessible qu'à la foi, qui ne peut être révélé que par l'Esprit saint; hors cette révélation, l'Ancien Testament reste un livre fermé.

The implications of this "hidden sense" for Biblical scholarship are serious and require thorough investigation.

Moreover, further consequences of this unwillingness to discriminate within the Biblical material emerge. First, we are often led unawares to look at the O.T. through the eyes of the D or Predactor. In her theological comments on the institution of the monarchy the authoress depends entirely on the later narrative of 1 Samuel and gives no hint that there is any other. Similarly, the apocalyptic view that things will get worse and worse in history until God finally clears up the mess is taken (through the Synoptic apocalypse of Mark xiii and parallels) to be the *Christian* view of history. Is this really all that Christians have to say about the world's future? Again, St Paul's moral teaching on

family relations is regarded as binding out of its context *tout seul*. Further, in trying to show that there is no code of morals in the Bible, she stresses the lies of the Patriarchs and the hatred expressed by many prophets and psalmists, and says nothing of the Sermon on the Mount; presumably because they are all of equal importance for the Christian, so that the last named cannot counterbalance the former. Lastly it is interesting to note that she practically ignores the Wisdom literature, and the Apocrypha is only referred to at one point in connexion with Daniel. Esther is not mentioned. Would it have been so easy to maintain this line if they had been more adequately treated? Not that it is always easy as it is. In her attempt to make sense of the Fall narrative of Genesis iii Mlle de Diétrich slides from man *knowing* good and evil to man wanting to be the *arbiter* of good and evil, which is a very different thing.

Probably Continentals would say that to wish to discriminate within the Bible is "subjective" and "liberal" and to be stoutly resisted. Certainly it raises problems. But is the alternative of this book, that of treating all parts of the Bible as of equal theological importance (and yet missing out some), combined with a doctrine of a "hidden sense," any real solution? We are grateful for this book, not only because it contains many profound things, but also because it brings this question to our minds so clearly.

RONALD H. PRESTON.

Christ's Mastery of the Devils

WHEN the scribes asserted that Jesus cast out devils by the prince of the devils they were reasoning more logically than many commentators perceive. They implied that Jesus had authority over the devils because He was their employer, their master. Jesus replied, in effect, that the exorcisms which He had accomplished pointed in another direction since the devils evidently obeyed unwillingly and rebelliously. If He were their employer, Satan would seem to be ranged against Satan in civil war. In actual fact, however, He was their master in the sense that He was the "stronger man," that He had vanquished them, and that He commanded them as their conqueror.

The crowd which first noted the power of Jesus over devils and unclean spirits made but an ambiguous statement: He commands them and they obey (Mark i, 27). The scribes from Jerusalem were not prepared to contest that. The suspicion that He had authority over devils because He was their master and employer persisted. It was this suspicion which accounts for certain statements in *Mark* which have puzzled critics. It was necessary for Christian preachers (from whom Mark got his material) to insist that the meeting between Jesus and the devils was always marked by sharp conflict before it ended in the submission of the vanquished to the victor. Thus it was emphasized that at Capernaum (i, 26) the spirit tore the man and uttered a loud cry before going out. So the spirit of Legion (v, 7) screamed in anguished protest at the presence of Jesus. The account

of the destruction of the unclean spirits in and with the swine ceases now to be a dark mystery. It was proof that the spirits obeyed one who was their conqueror and their destroyer. Again, the unclean spirit frenziedly tore the epileptic boy (ix, 26) before departing, evidence not of willing compliance but of a sharp conflict and opposition and surrender.

On the same lines—namely, that these details were remembered and handed down because of their value in preaching—on the same lines we can account for the devils' so-called "confession" of Jesus: these incidents were recorded because they witnessed to the falsity of the Beelzebub charge. Brought face to face with Jesus, the devils cried out in anguish, in defiance, perhaps defiantly jeering; and Jesus was obliged to silence them in order to establish the victory over them. In i, 23, 24, the unclean spirit interrupted the discourse with a scream of fear. The unclean spirits at iii, 11 screamed "Thou art the Son of God,": and Jesus rebuked them, as also He forbade the demons to speak because they knew Him (i, 34). Thus Legion greeted Him with a fearful cry, acknowledging Him and begging not to be tormented. St Paul was similarly oppressed at Philippi by the anguished, yet defiant and jeering, cry of the possessed girl (Acts xvi, 16 *ff.*) until he rebuked the spirit. This is no silencing of "confessing" devils lest He should be known. It is a vanquishing of evil spirits *because* they knew Him, in order both to restore peace and quell clamour and also to establish that He deals with them as vanquisher. Meeting them so, there would be no armistice and no neutrality; it must issue in conflict and in the victory of Jesus. It was a public proclamation of His victory for those with ears to hear and eyes to see, which yet remained ambiguous mastery for those whose hearts were hardened.

F. C. Synge.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

The Rev. Martin Jarrett-Kerr is a member of the Community of the Resurrection and Sub-Prior of St Teilo's Priory, Cardiff.

Sir Walter Moberly is Chairman of the University Grants Committee.

The Rev. R. H. Preston is Study Secretary of the Student Christian Movement.

The Rev. F. C. Synge is Warden of St Paul's College, Grahamstown.

CORRESPONDENCE

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

To the Editor of Theology.

Dear Sir,

May I be permitted to add a small contribution to the discussion now proceeding on the relation of baptism to confirmation?

Dom Gregory Dix, in *The Shape of the Liturgy*, has accustomed us to the notion that the original compilers of the Book of Common Prayer

were fatally "post-medieval" in their outlook, even, and perhaps especially, where they were striving to get back behind the thought and practice of the Middle Ages to those of the Scriptures and the primitive Church. It was precisely this post-medievalism which led them into positions far closer to those of the Continental reformers, and which presents an awkward situation to those of us who have sought to profess a Catholicism based four-square on the Book of Common Prayer.

This awkward post-medievalism is by no means confined to the Eucharist. It is equally apparent in the way the Anglican reformers treated baptism and confirmation. As in the case of the eucharist, so here too they inherited a medieval practice which had thrown the theology of the Fathers out of gear, and they therefore sought to adjust that theology to current practice. In his article "The Doctrine of Confirmation" (THEOLOGY, September, 1945), Prof. Ramsey notices this adjustment: "In Western Christianity a development of doctrine can be seen. It is apparent both in Thomas Aquinas and in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, where confirmation is expounded not as a sacrament of initiation, but as a sacrament of growth. It appears also in the Book of Common Prayer." Then follows a comparison of the words of the confirmation prayer as given in 1549 with those of 1552. Prof. Ramsey would thus seem to invite us to infer from the words "strengthen" and "daily increase" that since 1552 the Church of England has officially interpreted confirmation as a sacrament of growth in agreement with the theology of Thomas Aquinas and the Council of Trent. Which is comforting for Prayer Book Catholics but nevertheless, as I shall try to show, untenable, at any rate as regards the original intention of the Prayer Book.

At a recent conference I heard an Eastern Orthodox and a Lutheran theologian discussing the respective doctrines of their churches on baptism and confirmation. The Orthodox theologian had given an account of what was substantially the patristic theology and practice, whereupon the Lutheran rose and made the significant remark, "As a Lutheran I agree entirely with what has been said about baptism and confirmation, but I should have said all that about baptism only. We have no precise theology of confirmation." These words seemed to me to express pretty much what the Prayer Book was after.

First, with regard to baptism, Prof. Ramsey observes: "It is emphatically the teaching of the Prayer Book that in the rite of Holy Baptism we are made members of Christ and of the Church which is His Body. As a corollary of this many Anglican divines have refused to deny that baptized children participate in the Holy Spirit." I would contend that this is more than a corollary deduced by the Anglican divines as an afterthought. It is the explicit assertion of the rite itself, and that is the main ground for supposing that in the Prayer Book after 1552 Anglican baptism=patristic and orthodox baptism+confirmation. The grounds for this supposition are as follows:

(1) The opening prayer in the baptismal service states that the event about to take place is the baptism of the child "with water and the Holy Ghost."

(2) In the second prayer we say "wash him and sanctify him with the Holy Ghost."

(3) The prayer immediately following the exhortation on the Gospel contains the words "Give thy Holy Spirit to this infant."

(4) The prayer immediately preceding the blessing of the water says, "Grant that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in him."

(5) Finally in the thanksgiving after the baptism it is asserted that in this act it has pleased God to "regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit."

Taken by themselves (1), (2), and (5) might lend support to the theory that in baptism the Holy Ghost is merely the external agent but is not given to dwell in the believer until his confirmation. But it is significant that (1) is based on the language of John iii, 5, and this is the very text which the aforesaid Orthodox theologian quoted in support of his contention that in the New Testament there are *two* sacraments of initiation—baptism, corresponding to the water, and confirmation, corresponding to the Spirit. Be this as it may, (3) puts it beyond all doubt that the Spirit is given in baptism, and (4) that this gift is the indwelling Spirit. There is little room for doubt that since 1552 the Anglican rite has asserted that baptism does what in the early Church was, and what still in the Orthodox Church is, held to be done by both baptism and confirmation together.

But it will be objected that even so the Anglican reformers are not in complete agreement with the Continental reformers, for have they not retained the sacramental rite of confirmation, with the laying on of hands, and the explicit statement that a further gift of the Holy Spirit is thereby given, not indeed to initiate the candidate into the Church but to strengthen him? Is not the Anglican rite of confirmation satisfactorily interpreted if we say with Thomas Aquinas that it is a sacrament of growth? Now the reformers had amplified their baptismal theology in order to square it with the medieval practice of separating baptism from confirmation by a longish interval, and also, as they thought, to bring it into line with the New Testament doctrine of baptism. But they retained confirmation as a church rite. In the Church of England they retained the bishop as its minister, they retained the customary age for its administration, they retained the condition that only the confirmed were normally to be admitted to Communion. The chief alterations were first the alteration of the prayer for the Spirit and the formula of "administration" noted by Prof. Ramsey, and secondly the rubric that before the confirmation the candidates were to have been instructed in the Catechism and to have been examined by the Bishop or a substitute appointed by him. The question at present in our service was not, of course, added until 1662. Nevertheless I am convinced that the instruction and examination were meant to be a vital part of the process. The service of confirmation was meant largely as public testimony that the instruction had been given and assimilated. This would explain why (apart from natural conservatism) the reformers did not admit persons only baptized but not confirmed to Holy Communion, as logically on their

principles they should have done. The Lutherans likewise admit to Communion normally only after "confirmation," and the reason for this restriction I have seen given as the Pauline one that the intending communicant must be able to "discern the Lord's Body." Perhaps it is this which lurks behind the phrase "years of discretion." Having been instructed in the doctrine of the gospel as set forth in the Church Catechism the candidate was in a position to discern the Lord's Body, to understand the rite which set forth that Gospel. In confirmation he was giving public witness that he could discern the Lord's Body and could therefore proceed to Communion. What could be more appropriate than that at that moment the chief officer of the Church should pray that they might be strengthened in the Holy Spirit? It was a very personal occasion, and that act of intercession was performed in a very personal way—by the scriptural method of laying on of hands. It was not a sacrament, for a sacrament was an outward act commanded by Christ, with a promise that that outward act performed obediently by the Church would be the occasion of a redemptive act of God. Confirmation carried no such command or promise with it. Confirmation, after 1552, was to be not a sacrament, either of growth or of initiation, but a solemn act of intercession.

But as in the eucharist, so in baptism and confirmation the Anglican reformers left open certain loopholes for the eventual recovery of patristic doctrine. They had retained a definite outward rite performed by the chief minister of the Church, not merely a public examination of the candidate's faith and knowledge of Christian doctrine, as had happened in some other reformed communions. They had retained an explicit reference to the Holy Spirit in their intercessory prayer. They had made confirmation normally the *sine qua non* for admission to Communion, though not, as I have contended, for the same reason that the early Church did. It was not therefore surprising that in the first patristic revival which the Church of England has experienced—that of the seventeenth century—some Anglican divines were cautiously feeling their way back to a more patristic doctrine. While generally the Carolines refrained from calling confirmation a sacrament, even a sacrament of growth, some of them began to say that in the rite the Holy Spirit was not merely prayed for, He was actually bestowed. Prof. Ramsey notices the teaching of Jeremy Taylor in this connexion. As is well known, the 1662 Prayer Book enshrines certain modifications of its predecessors which are the outcome of the teaching of the Caroline school, all of them marking a movement away from the reformed position back to the teaching and practice of the primitive Church. One interesting instance of this modification of the doctrine of the earlier reformers was the circumstance created by the insertion of the rite of "Public Baptism of such as are of riper years." Not that there is any perceptible change in the rite itself as compared with the service for infant baptism. The striking point about this new service is to be found in the rubric, "It is expedient that every person, thus baptized, should be confirmed by the Bishop so soon after his baptism as conveniently may be; that so he may be admitted to the holy Communion." Now if the revisers

of 1662 had accepted the theology of Cranmer they would never have written this rubric. For then the confirmation of those baptized as adults would have been superfluous. What need was there for the candidates to show that they were instructed and professing Christians when they had already themselves given public testimony to this in their baptism only a short time before? And was there any need of a special prayer over them that they should be strengthened by the Holy Ghost, so soon after He had been given to them at baptism? The German Lutheran Church, which has experienced no significant revival of patristic theology, still argues thus, and does not for instance confirm Jews baptized as adults, but admits them straightway to communion.

However illogically the confirmation of adults baptized as such fits into the general scheme of the Prayer Book, it certainly paved the way for an even more extensive revival of patristic theology after 1833. Since then it has been commonly taught that the confirmation service is a sacrament, in which a gift of the Holy Spirit is conveyed. Cranmer's prayer for the Holy Spirit at the laying on of hands made this possible, but was not what he intended it to mean. The position is similar to that of the eucharistic prayer of oblation. The general trend of Tractarian and post-Tractarian teaching has been that confirmation is a sacrament of growth.

Just as the 1662 Prayer Book registers to some extent the teaching of the Carolines, so the 1928 Prayer Book partly registers the effects of the teaching of the second patristic revival under the Tractarians. True, the 1928 book did not go far enough for the High Church party of the twentieth century, but neither did the 1662 book for that of the seventeenth. The opening exhortation of 1928 bases the Anglican confirmation rite quite definitely on the apostolic precedent of Acts viii. This seems very nice, but has landed the Anglican Church into a hopeless muddle. On the one hand the 1928 book contains the 1662 baptismal service, together with a new service containing no marked departure from the accepted Anglican doctrine that the Holy Ghost is given in baptism; furthermore the confirmation prayers still contain the words "strengthen" and "daily increase," which Cranmer intended as prayers of intercession, but which are capable of being interpreted as implying that confirmation is a sacrament of growth. On the other hand we now have our confirmation service based on an apostolic precedent in which it is asserted that in baptism the Holy Ghost had *not* been given, which asserts that He is conveyed sacramentally (and not merely interceded for) by the laying on of hands, and that this sacrament is not therefore a sacrament of growth but one of initiation. Could the muddle be greater? Its sole justification is that it is a fair expression of the mind of the Church of England at this present juncture!

If we want to restore the patristic position in theology and practice, we must at least certainly know where we are starting from. But even so there are certain questions which the reformers asked and which the other side has not yet faced. Is a sacrament an action commanded by Christ to which a promise of a saving act of divine grace is attached?

Is any other rite, however edifying, not a sacrament, and therefore not an effectual sign of the operation of God's grace? If so, can confirmation be accounted a sacrament? Or is this definition of a sacrament wholly unbiblical? When the New Testament theologians speak of the baptismal experience, do they in fact mean what the reformers meant by baptism or what the Fathers and the Easterns mean by baptism-plus-confirmation? Lastly, does not 1 Cor. xi, 29 invalidate the communion of infants?

Yours faithfully,
REGINALD H. FULLER.

18 AMPTON ROAD,
EDGBASTON,
BIRMIMGHAM, 15.

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

The Rev. C. D. F. Moule's proposal to retain a water baptism of infants which, because of their incapacity for conscious response, must be regarded not as a regeneration but simply as "a personal dedication of the participating adults to the will of God with a view to His blessing a babe," is to confuse rather than to clarify a grave issue with which the Church is faced to-day. As you, Sir, yourself pointed out in a valuable editorial in July, 1940, baptism and dedication are two distinct rites. If repentance and conversion are necessary dispositions in the recipient of baptism with the Holy Ghost, we should have no alternative save to revert to the primitive practice of baptizing adults only.

As a disciplinary measure this would be very acceptable to many of us. But is it theologically necessary, or does the present state of our knowledge compel us to conclude that an infant cannot be said to "receive the Holy Ghost"? If baptism is indeed "a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness," is Mr Moule justified in taking this to be an experience of conversion, an *individual* response? The New Testament appears to emphasize not so much the individual experience of the baptized as his incorporation into Christ's mystical Body which in every age shows forth the mystery of His dying and rising again. To be baptized is to be delivered out of the power of darkness and to be translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love; to be called out of darkness into His marvellous light. The Church is the messianic community upon which the Spirit is poured out, the temple of God in which the Spirit dwells. All incorporated into that fellowship are "enlightened" because admitted into a community which is filled with light. The infant admitted into that Spirit-filled Body can surely be truly described as "filled with the Holy Ghost," those upon whom the light of grace shines may be said to be "enlightened" (Heb. vi, 4; x, 32) or "children of light" (Eph. v, 8). We respond to that which we first experience; we must in one sense "have" the Spirit of God before we can acknowledge Him. St Augustine might have written of infant, as truly as of adult, baptism that "from the time our faith begins to dawn we have been granted mercy, not because we were but that we might become believers" (*Ep.* cxciv).

Thus to argue that the infant may receive the Holy Ghost and the grace of God is not to condone our present laxity in the administration of baptism; rather it should spur us on to far-reaching disciplinary reform. If the baptized is grafted into the Body of Christ's Church, it is necessary that the supernatural life of grace should flow about him from baptism onwards, if his eyes are to grow accustomed to that light into which he has been brought out of darkness, and if he is to make the conscious response which is undoubtedly an essential part of that process whereby we grow "unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
GEORGE BURNINGHAM.

DIOCESAN TRAINING COLLEGE,
FISHPONDS,
BRISTOL.
January 27, 1946.

BAPTISM OF THE ILLEGITIMATE

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

I was at one time chaplain of a small hospital where many children were born, almost without exception illegitimate, and found myself confronted with the same situation as Mr Heppenstall. I refused to baptize the children in a hole-and-corner way in a ward of the hospital, but—except in emergencies—always baptized them in church, and whenever possible in the presence of a congregation. That this should be done is important both for the child and the mother—that the child should be saved from avoidable hurt when it becomes necessary, as at confirmation, to secure evidence of his baptism; and for the mother whom the chaplain is helping to restore to the sacraments, and who is hampered if she is led to feel that there is a difference between her and other Church members.

It is often difficult to secure godparents. What I aimed at, and secured, was to find one godparent who was a practising church person, and to be content with that. If that could not be secured, I had to say the baptism must wait.

A similar difficulty arises now in my contacts with caravan dwellers, gypsies and others, who almost invariably want their children baptized. The difficulty is greater because they are often quite illiterate, are very ignorant—recently I had to deal with a young mother in her early twenties who not only could not read or write, but could not say the Lord's Prayer—and it is very difficult to keep in touch with them, or to commend them on to other priests, when they don't know where they will be halting next. So far I have been able to secure a godmother who will promise at least to pray for the child, if more than that is impossible. Whether even that will continue possible is doubtful, for the number of children any one person can be sponsor for is limited, and the supply of willing godparents much less in the country than in London.

Many will say these children should be left unbaptized when there can be no reliable guarantee that they will go to Sunday school or be brought to confirmation. But there is a real desire that the children should be baptized, and if there is superstition in it ought we not to be tender to it? I think the mothers do know that the Lord asked that the children should be brought to Him.

Yours sincerely,
W. C. Roberts.

Sutton Rectory,
Sandy,
Beds.
Candlemas, 1946.

SONS OR SERVANTS?

To the Editor of Theology.

Sir,

Mr Yates' interpretation of Luke xv, 11-end in the January number of Theology is ingenious, but fails to take into account a considerable body of parables which deal with the themes of service and reward. Three of these parables are about the behaviour of servants in their master's absence. In Mark xiii, 33 the master, before leaving, charges each of his servants with a particular duty and enjoins the porter to watch; in Luke xii, 42-6 attention is concentrated on the steward who is left with the care of the household; in Matt. xxv, 14-30 three servants are entrusted with sums of money to conduct their master's business. In none of these parables is there any suggestion that service is a status which man sinfully prefers to sonship, shrinking from the privileges and responsibilities which the latter involves. On the contrary, they appear to indicate that man is placed in this position by God, entrusted with a duty to do and judged according to his discharge of that duty. The warning in the first two is, literally, not to be caught napping. And further, in another parable, Luke xvii, 7-10, the disciples are told to call themselves "servants," and "unprofitable" ones at that.

Nowhere, in fact, in the Synoptic Gospels is there any justification for regarding sonship and service as opposed and mutually exclusive conceptions. Through treating this parable in isolation and concentrating on detail, Mr Yates has shifted the emphasis from the behaviour of the father to the supposed sin of the sons. The same mistake has often been made with the Unjust Steward; but the parables are not moral tales; the sons' behaviour was natural enough. True, as Mr Yates points out, the younger son returns entirely from self-interest. But this motive of his only sets off the joy of the father and the welcome that he gives, and, perhaps, though this may be stretching it too far, the way he creates good out of evil, something real out of nothing (*cf.* Matt. xxv, 24). The meaning is the same as in the two parables that precede, while the parable of the elder son has affinities with the Labourers in the Vineyard. Moreover, if the attitude of the sons is to be seen as sin, this sin is not a desire to serve, but to be a μίσθιος, not a δοῦλος, to work for wages and bread and not out of filial love.

There are five words in the New Testament which are translated by "servant." Two of these, παῖς and διάκονος, are used of Jesus. Διάκονος describes His service to men, and παῖς His relationship with the Father. This latter word is highly significant, for in it the conceptions of son and servant meet. (It is ambiguous, for instance, in Matt. viii, 5 *et seq.*) παῖς κυρίου is the phrase from Second Isaiah quoted both in the Gospels and in the Apostolic preaching in Acts where Jesus is seen as the Servant of the Lord. There is another point of contact in Mark i, 11 and Is. xlii, 1. Now "a disciple is not above his master or a servant above his lord. If they have called the master of the house" "The Servant," "how much more them of his household?" (Matt. x, 25). For both sonship and service involve obedience, though the obedience of true service is an obedience out of love and not for hire (John xiv, 15). Obedience to the Law tended to be for hire, expecting tangible reward, but obedience to the law of Christ is a willing obedience which is always considered by the servant to be inadequate and "unprofitable."

From Gal. iv, 6, 7, it might seem that St Paul does not concur with the Synoptic point of view. But a careful examination of surrounding passages reveals something else. It is not from slavery to God that men are delivered, but, in the case of the Gentiles, from those which by nature are no gods (8), and, in the case of the Jews, from bondage to the Law which also is a bondage to the "elements of the world" (3); so that the temptation of the Galatians to accept the Law is declared to be a relapse into their old slavery to heathen gods. This interpretation is confirmed by Rom. vi, 15-23. Men are redeemed from one service to another. (Paul speaks after the manner of men, for δουλεία is a very strong word which suggests compulsion.) We can serve Mammon or God, "of sin unto death," or "of obedience unto righteousness." The former service earns wages—death, but the service of God merits no wages, so God crowns it with a free unmerited gift of eternal life.

The Fourth Gospel, also, has something to say on this subject. In viii, 31-45 the Jews condemn themselves with tremendous irony. They claim to be the seed of Abraham (33), and, unlike the Samaritans, true sons of God (41), and yet they have never been in service to anybody (33). Jesus declares them to be servants of sin and sons of the devil (34 and 44) (*cf.* Matt. iii, 7). Unless they are freed by the Son they will soon be turned out of the household (35, *cf.* Matt. viii, 12).

In the Synoptic Gospels, in St Paul and in the Fourth Gospel, the ideas of sons and servants appear side by side. They are analogies and not antitheses. There is a service of sin and a service of righteousness; a sonship of the devil and a sonship of God. But they are not on an equal level. Son is the comprehensive term which includes the other, while the converse is not true. The service of men is God's right, but when it is given, in so far as it can be, He lifts men out of it by grace into a new relationship of son or of friend. "Henceforth I call you not servants." "Ye are my friends *if ye do whatsoever I command you*" (John xv, 15, 14).

J. E. R. Westlake.

Westminster.

BOOK REVIEWS

NATURAL LAW: A CHRISTIAN RECONSIDERATION. Edited by A. R. Vidler and W. A. Whitehouse. S.C.M. Press. 2s.

This short book summarizes the work of a group which has been meeting for some years at St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden. It represents a measure of agreement between Christians of different confessions and different types of experience, who for various reasons are interested in the question of natural law. In addition to the points of agreement, which cover the fundamentals of the doctrine and represent a mediating position between its Protestant opponents and what they attack, a number of specific questions are raised with regard to the application of natural law, in the hope that other workers may take them up.

Natural law is the ordered structure of the world, considered as proceeding from the divine reason and as constituting a rule by which the activities of all creatures are or ought to be regulated. In relation to mankind it is a system of imperatives expressing the manner in which human nature ought to be realized in the service of God. In fact, it is a moral standard; only it is not projected from human desires, as in utilitarianism, or constructed by human reason, as in Kant, but embodied in the structure of things and read off from them by human reason. Christians know that it was God, the same God who is in Christ, who put it there, and that therefore subjection to natural law is in its degree a subjection to Christ, the law preserving the life of man in his place in the world, while at the same time convicting him of impotence and bringing him to repentance and salvation. Non-Christians can in a degree discern the natural law even while failing to connect it with Christ; this does not mean that it is really separable from Him, but simply that ignorance of its relation to Him does not involve ignorance of everything else about it.

The law is called natural, not in contrast with supernatural, but in contrast with positive law, to indicate that it is a norm by which all empirical decisions and adjustments are to be judged. It is true that our knowledge of it does not come exclusively from revelation, but also from reason, which in apprehending the law is apprehending not itself but God's will. But this rational apprehension in fallen man is so fragmentary and unreliable in detail that a republication of the whole law through the channels of revelation was necessary, yet not in order to supersede reason but to set it free to do its work properly.

In this balanced fashion the book picks its way between the Pelagian Scylla and the Barthian Charybdis. But there are several points on which one might wish for further clarification.

1. The word "reason" is used in at least two senses and without definition. On the one hand "reason" is contrasted with "vital impulses" and "irrational fate" (p. 18), or again with "arbitrary dictates" of God (p. 21). Natural law is rational and is apprehended by reason in a sense which excludes these things. Elsewhere (p. 15) we are told that Locke and Paley shifted natural law from a basis of "Stoic rationalism" to one of "utilitarian empiricism." But obviously

the appeal to utility and experience is in a recognized sense of the word an appeal to "reason," and "utilitarian empiricism" is as "rational" as Stoicism when contrasted with vitalism and arbitrary authoritarianism. The believer in natural law is necessarily opposed to irrationalism, but must he take sides in the philosophical controversy over the source and authority of the *a priori* in human thinking? Surely Bentham's point, that if natural law means anything at all it means judging things by their conduciveness to good as shown by experience, is a legitimate gloss on the doctrine?

2. We are told repeatedly that non-Christians can in some real measure discern the natural law, but it seems to be taken for granted that these non-Christians are theists. It is with these that the Christian can co-operate in the work of the world. Can non-theists apprehend enough of the natural law to make such co-operation possible with them? Granting that the ordered structure of the world, which is the ontological background of natural law, owes its existence in fact to God, is it impossible to discern this structure with any worth-while degree of accuracy without the knowledge that it depends on Him? And, further, can a practical philosophy with which Christians can come to terms be held with a relativistic epistemology? Apparently not in the view of the authors. We are told that failure to recognize a transcendent God must result in perverse legislation (p. 38), and that today amid the wholesale revaluation of all values "it is no longer possible, as it used to be, to derive the conception of justice from human reason and morality alone" (p. 32). On p. 21 we read that "human nature disintegrates and loses its dignity in so far as man seeks significance for his life in its relations to created being, but out of relation to the Creator." These are not only theoretical, but severely practical questions: for the number of non-Christians who are also non-theists and even in some degree relativists is large. If co-operation with them can only be on a day-to-day basis of opportunism, that is of high importance for Christian social action. In order to be a possible collaborator with Christians is it necessary explicitly to recognize God as an existing transcendent Being? Will any form of pantheism suffice, or a devotion to absolute values conceived as timelessly subsisting and having a claim on our will? Or perhaps a recognition that man needs a supertemporal absolute as his moral and spiritual focus-point, even though this recognition may not be combined with any claim to knowledge about this absolute? On the other hand, if even the theistic non-Christian conceives natural law in a way which is not merely incomplete but unbalanced, must not all collaboration with non-Christians be on a basis whose insufficiencies will lead at last to frustration?

3. Theologians are expected to speak as Christians, and when they reach a concordat with non-Christians it is from their Christian position that they move towards it. But what about Christians who are philosophers and who profess philosophy, of which ethics is an essential part? Their profession imposes on them a certain degree of Socratic irony. As Christians they are necessarily theists and more than theists; but it is part of their business to examine what can be legitimately

inferred from those premisses which are available to men who have not received a revelation. Even in a Christian university in a Christian society St Thomas recognized and practised this duty; much more is it a duty now. But St Thomas thought and his disciples still think that even on that understanding it is possible to establish a basic theism, and therefore also the outlines of natural law, in a way which should carry conviction even to non-Christians. Today some Christian philosophers may believe that, on the understanding that revelation is not to be appealed to, no satisfactory case can be made out for theism. Is it then to be expected that these philosophers will also find it impossible on that basis to make a satisfactory case for a reasonably adequate version of natural law? Will they be compelled in their irony to canvass views which as Christians they recognize to be not merely partial but actually perverse?

4. The natural law doctrine works, as most ethical theories do, with abstract formulæ and general concepts. These are necessary for the sake of analytical precision and clarity, and when natural law is applied, as it often is, for casuistical purposes, these qualities are indispensable. But casuistry is not the sole application of ethics. It can and should also be applied in a more general way to diffuse a consciousness of the moral ideal or life-pattern and to arouse interest in it. For this purpose we need not so much precise definitions of the limits of the permissible, but rather deep analyses and moving expressions of the nature of the desirable. We must set the imagination to work and construct ideal types. We must penetrate behind these to the deep-seated archetypes and paradigmatic experiences, and must discriminate among these between those elements which are good and those which are evil. Psychology and anthropology should be called in to help with the work. So to the valuable list on p. 30 of seven "investigations which need to be undertaken" I would add an eighth: "(*h*) The archetypal and paradigmatic values which underlie the abstract formulæ of ethical discussion, and the possibility of expressing natural law in terms of these."

H. A. Hodges.

Reading.

The Scripture Lesson: A Handbook to the Agreed Syllabi. Edited by J. W. Harmer. Inter-varsity Fellowship. 12s. 6d.

The scripture lesson is no longer plain sailing. Instead of the Bible and perhaps a devout commentary for his reference books, the scripture teacher must now read up the latest works of scholarship, and, balancing argument against argument and conclusion against conclusion, achieve some kind of synthesis and define his own attitude. If he sets out with presuppositions about infallibility, he will probably remain unimpressed and in his teaching will refer to the heresies of criticism only in order to refute them; if he becomes a disillusioned man, he may feel obliged to disillusion his pupils, or, on the other hand, to protect them from disillusionment, much as an adult conceals a family tragedy from a child; but if, while confessing the authority of the Bible as the Word of God, and because of that very faith, he is

prepared to make an objective study, and he finds that criticism has some contribution to make to exegesis, he may still be puzzled about the presentation of its results—at what age level, how much, and in what way.

In some respects, however, the situation is eased—that is, if the generally established findings of scholarship are accepted. Tensions between the Old and New Testaments, and within the Old Testament itself, are resolved. The order of studying books or passages of the Bible is decided and, above all, selection (a fine art in teaching) is ready-made. The genuine sayings of Isaiah fall into a logical pattern in the context of his life and a clearer picture is drawn. Law and liturgy are seen to emerge out of the political, social or moral situation, though none the less God-given for that. The Synoptic problem may remain unmentioned throughout the whole school course, but the teacher will be equipped to find the best source for a narrative and to compare the interpretation of the evangelists.

This Handbook offers no help in such a method. It sees modern criticism as an attack and wields its guns only if they can be turned against the other side. The Bible is described as "the product of the infallible Spirit" and its human writers as ships "before the wind." "Of this Word and God-given message the Church is the servant, not the mistress; the steward, not the author." That the "conservative viewpoint" is common to most or all of the contributors becomes gradually apparent to the reader, though not indicated in the Introduction. Traditional authorship and the unity of the prophetic books are sturdily defended and literary criticism of the Gospels declared unjustified.

Only those who can accept this position will be able to use the Old Testament sections; the interpretation of the New is not affected. Here there is a temptation to distort the Gospel in the interests of supposed psychological needs; but, as the Cambridge Syllabus points out, hero-worship is "a bright enough flame while it lasts but is bound to flicker out. Christ is more than a hero to be admired; He is the Revelation of God in history and an abiding power in the lives of men."

This book suggests courses and material for the whole Secondary stage. There is a vivid account of Acts, a useful arrangement of St John's Gospel for teaching, a sketch of Church History and missionary work, advice on technique and illustration (with rather too much emphasis on effect and the personality of the teacher), chronological charts and a guarded bibliography.

The treatment of Christian life and worship provokes special comment. The phraseology is too tentative. A definition of "loving God" as "making room for Him in our lives" hardly suggests the reiterated demand in the Bible for the obedience of the whole personality, or the implied ideal of 1 Cor. xii, 12 "to be as a man's hand is to a man." And Brother Lawrence, whose constant realization of God's presence is urged in this chapter as a possible aim for every Christian, said that "the heart must be empty of all other things, because God will possess the heart alone." Public worship should be

laid down as an essential of Christian duty, and morning and evening prayer times should not be considered alternatives. Especially nowadays children must be taught to offer a sacrifice of some definite portions of their time.

There are flashes of theological insight throughout this Handbook, for the writers treat the Bible as revelation and not evolution. But although the theme of judgment in both Testaments should by no means be ignored, children, who are normally unaccustomed to elaborate casuistry, may find some difficulty in associating the mass executions of Jehovah (a name used several times in this book) with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

J. E. R. WESTLAKE.

WESTMINSTER.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CROSS. By F. W. Dillistone. Lutterworth Press. 12s. 6d.

A new study of the Atonement, if it is to be worth reading, calls for something fresh and stimulating in the manner of treatment, which will bring the reader a quickened and more imaginative understanding of what many books have already made familiar. It seems to us that Mr Dillistone has passed this test with a considerable measure of success. The book does not begin very happily, but it is to be hoped that the reader will not be put off by the rather unpromising pulpit rhetoric of its first chapter. When the writer really gets down to business he becomes, from the second chapter onwards, both interesting and instructive.

The book falls into two main parts. The first is a lucid and valuable study of the New Testament foundations, with particular attention to the metaphors used in describing the Lord's work and to the names applied to Him. This is done with some fullness and with scholarly care, though sometimes one might dispute the author's exegesis and judgment on matters of proportion and emphasis. He realizes that "if we come to the New Testament expecting to find a cut-and-dried theory of the rationale of the Atonement, we shall be disappointed; if, on the other hand, we come prepared to examine its metaphors and names carefully, and to allow them to quicken our imaginations and enlighten our minds, we shall discover that very thing which the New Testament waits to give." Both students and preachers will find useful material in this study of such ideas as redemption, salvation, justification, consecration, reconciliation and the like. Mr Dillistone makes good use of P. T. Forsyth and Dr Vincent Taylor, among other writers.

The second part of the book deals with the interpretation of the Cross. Mr Dillistone sets aside what he calls the "deductive method" of St Anselm in the *Cur Deus Homo* and the "inductive method" which he illustrates from Rashdall's Bampton Lectures. Without denying their value, he prefers what he describes as the method of imaginative comparison, which uses "the language of the imagination rather than of scientific logic." "In approaching such a subject as the coming together of God and man in and through the Atonement wrought by

Christ, man cannot simply reason in logical terms; he can only imagine and believe." This is dangerous language, since it may seem to open the gate to a riot of undisciplined irrationalism. But Mr Dillistone turns out to be not so irrationalist as some of his phrases might portend. What he really does is to use a method of analogy, drawing from four large areas of human experience appropriate illustrations or analogies to express the meaning of the Cross in terms that belong to the common life of men. From the universal human experience of struggle and conflict he illustrates the theme of Christus Victor. From man's community-life, with its basis in justice, he illustrates the aspects of reparation and judgment. From the creativity of man's cultural life he derives an analogy to God's re-creation of man through Christ's identification of Himself with sinful and suffering humanity. And family life, especially the father-son relationship, provides the analogy for the forgiving love of the Father and the perfect obedience of the Son.

These chapters are worked out with much resourcefulness and skill. They make a very effective contribution to the task of interpreting a cardinal doctrine of the Faith to the contemporary mind, especially since the writer shows no disposition to water down the doctrine or reduce it to exemplarism.

H. Balmforth.

Ely.

The Great Divorce. By C. S. Lewis. Bles. 7s. 6d.

In *The Great Divorce* Mr Lewis visits Heaven, which turns out to be not very unlike the planets of his earlier excursions, except that it is easier to get at—you go by bus. Mr Lewis, with a little party of ghosts, leaves Hell, which is a sort of dreary industrial town, and travels to the hinterland of Heaven. There they find that they can come when they like, and stay as long as they like; in fact, they can stay for ever if they please, and the blessed spirits do all they can to persuade them to stay.

But they must be ready to renounce Hell—there is no marriage between Heaven and Hell but an eternal divorce, an eternal "either-or." "If we insist on keeping Hell (or even earth) we shall not see Heaven; if we accept Heaven we shall not be able to retain even the smallest and most intimate souvenirs of Hell."

Now this may be a very profound truth, but it is also one which the reader accepts quite readily, and, once Mr Lewis has convinced us, his persuasiveness is rather wasted on the converted. The various representatives of Hell—the man who is out for his rights, the bishop who would rather run a theological course for the damned than accept God as a fact—are all quickly demolished. Indeed, they do not offer any real resistance; they are scarcely worthy of the wit which they receive—it is like bringing a steam-hammer to crack a hazel nut.

But then Mr Lewis begins to be really interested not so much in the damned as in Heaven. His Heaven is a delicious place, delicious because it makes the mouth water as well as the eyes, and thinks both worthy of delight. There is a lovely, glittering, rural landscape, and

because, as it were, it is of *primary matter*, it is hard to the feet and hands of the time-ridden ghosts. Grass, fruit, trees, even water are all as if made of plastics.

Mr Lewis is shown round by George Macdonald ("Tu se' lo mio maestro, e il mio autore," he says, or the Lewisite equivalent), and from him learns much of the nature of Heaven and Hell:

" 'Look,' he said, and with the word he went down on his hands and knees. I did the same (how it hurt my knees!) and presently saw that he had plucked a blade of grass. Using its thin end as a pointer, he made me see, after I had looked very closely, a crack in the soil so small that I could not have identified it without this aid.

" 'I cannot be certain,' he said, 'that this *is* the crack ye came up through. But through a crack no bigger than that ye certainly came.' . . .

"Do you mean then that Hell—all that infinite empty town—is down in some little crack like this?'

" 'Yes. All Hell is smaller than one pebble of your earthly world: but it is smaller than one atom of *this* world. Look at yon butterfly. If it swallowed all Hell, Hell would not be big enough to do it any harm or to have any taste.' "

There are other events as illuminating as this, the allegory (rather surprisingly for allegory) gets better as it goes on, and the author's shrewdness and perception are always to be felt. I heard of a young ordinand who could not read Mr Lewis because "he knows too much about the Devil." At the end of this book I feel he knows too much about me.

NORMAN NICHOLSON.

MILLOM.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE. The Faculty of Divinity intend to appoint a University Lecturer to teach Hebrew and the Old Testament from 1 October, 1946. Candidates are invited to write for further particulars to the Secretary, the Faculty Board of Divinity, Clare College, Cambridge.—ADVT.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment.)

MICHAEL JOSEPH: J. McCulloch, *Medway Adventure* (12s. 6d.).
MACMILLAN, NEW YORK: T. O. Wedel, *The Coming Great Church* (£2.00).
PENGUIN BOOKS: S. Cook, *An Introduction to the Bible* (1s.); Montgomery Belgion, *Reading for Profit* (1s.).
S.C.M. PRESS: A. Miller, *The Christian Significance of Karl Marx* (6s.).
STAPLES: R. Hart, *The First Christmas* (2s. 6d.); *Stories that Jesus Told* (2s. 6d.).

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